MARVEL CLASSICS COMICS™

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THE ILIAD

ADAPTED FROM THE LITERARY EPIC BY HOMER

THE ILIAD

ALL NEW MARVEL CLASSICS COMICS

THE THRILLS OF THE ORIGINAL CLASSIC IN AN ALL-NEW COMICS VERSION!

50¢ THE ILIAD MARVEL CLASSICS COMICS

STAN LEE presents

THE ILIAD

BY HOMER

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To the Reader:

If Homer had lived today he might well have made his living writing comic books. Homer is the name literary historians traditionally give to the collection of storytellers in ancient Greece that composed the epic poem THE ILIAD. It was composed sometime between the fourth and tenth centuries. The story has it that Homer was a blind man —a bard who travelled from village to city, court to court, reciting in daily portions this poem recounting the exploits of the man-god Achilles near the close of the ten-year siege of the city of Troy, also known as Ilium.

Ancient bards and minstrels were part of a great oral — not written literary tradition. A bard would spend years of his life perfecting his material — his stand-up act which he either developed himself or inherited from previous masters of the craft. Nothing was ever written down. The composer would formulate one section of his story — in verse, so not a word could vary from one telling to the next — commit that to memory, and then go on to another part of the story. Homer structured both THE ILIAD and THE ODYSSEY poems so that he could tell them in 24 separate sessions. One complete recital earned Homer his dinner for a month, so his story had to be pretty hefty.

In adapting the ILIAD to the comics medium, I immediately knew I wouldn't be able to include every incident from this incredibly intricate tale. There is simply no way to get every detail of this terribly powerful tale into 48 illustrated pages and still retain its epic beauty. So in this telling you don't get to know Odysseus very well, and you don't get to meet neat characters like Diomedes or Polydamus at all. But Homer's eminently visual storytelling remains. In some places I put his own words in captions over the graphic scenes he describes, elsewhere I got brazen and tried my own hand at aping his superb anti-romantic, metaphoric tone.

What results is no more, no less than the interpretation by Yong Montano and myself of the intent of Homer's story.

--Elliot S. Maggin

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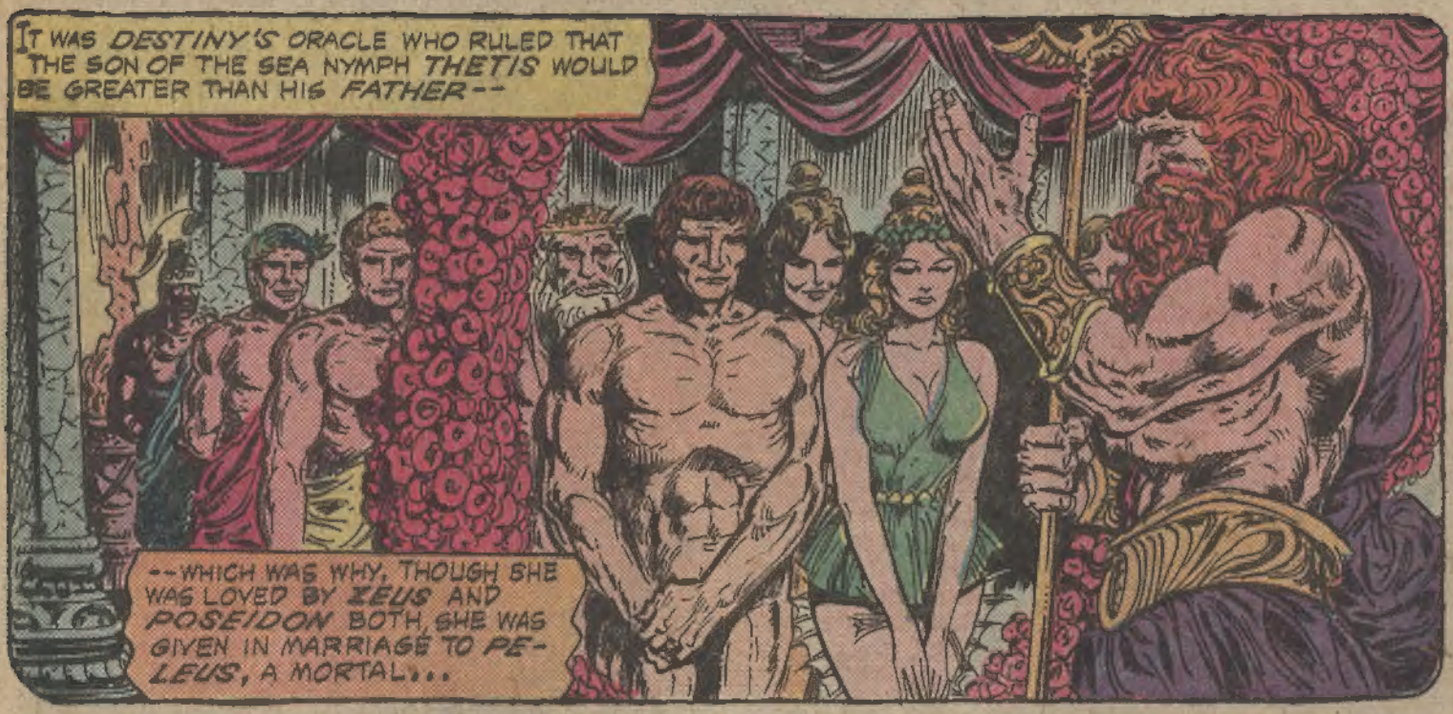
SING, O MUSES AND GODDESSES, THE RAGE OF ACHILLES, THE GREATEST OF WARRIORS, WHO SENT MANY A BRAVE SOUL SCREAMING TO HADES AND WHOM THE GODS THEMSELVES DID HONOR WITH THEIR PRAISE...
...FOR IN THE NINTH YEAR OF THE SIEGE OF TROY DID APOLLO, SON OF ZEUS, SEND A PLAGUE TO THE ACHAEN HOST AND FROM THAT HANGS A TALE OF WAR AND WARRIORS, GODS AND MORTALS, JEALOUSY AND LOVE, AND THE POWER OF DESTINY--
The ILIAD
by HOMER
THIS SICKNESS HAS KILLED MORE ACHAENS THAN THE ENEMY! WHERE DO YOU GO?
ACHILLES -- WE GO... TO THE KING... WITH THIS... THIS...
OHHH...

HE IS FALLEN... HE HAS THE SICKNESS TOO!
HE IS BEYOND THE SICKNESS--
--THE PLAGUE HAS TAKEN HIM AS IT HAS TAKEN THESE OTHERS!
YOU THREE TEND TO THE DYING...
I WILL ASK AGAMEMNON MYSELF WHAT TO DO WITH THE DEAD--
--AND I HAVE MORE TO ASK OF A KING WHOSE ARMY IS BEING DEFEATED...
...WHILE HIS ENEMY COWERS BEHIND A WALL!
BUT AGAMEMNON, KING OF ACHAENS, HAS ATTACKED THE PROBLEM THE ONLY WAY HE CAN--AS ACHILLES FINDS...
TELL ME, CALCHAS, TELL ME ABOUT THIS PLAGUE --TRUST YOUR KING!
VERILY THIS IS THE WORK OF GOD APOLLO, WHOSE WRATH YOU HAVE AWOKEN, GREAT AGAMEMNON!
I HAVE?... HOW?
WHEN YOU RAIDED A NEARBY TOWN FOR SUPPLIES, YOU SUPPLIED YOURSELF AND ACHILLES WITH TWO VERY BEAUTIFUL MAIDENS...
YOU TOOK YOUNG CHRYSEIS FOR YOURSELF AND REWARDED YOUR MIGHTY LIEUTENANT WITH THE COMPANY OF BRISEIS--"
"BUT CHRYSEIS IS THE DAUGHTER OF A PRIEST OF APOLLO...
GREAT GOD APOLLO I PRAY THAT YOU SEND A PLAGUE TO THE ACHAENS...
...UNTIL THEIR KING RETURNS MY CHRYSEIS!
"APOLLO WANTS THE GIRL BACK--"

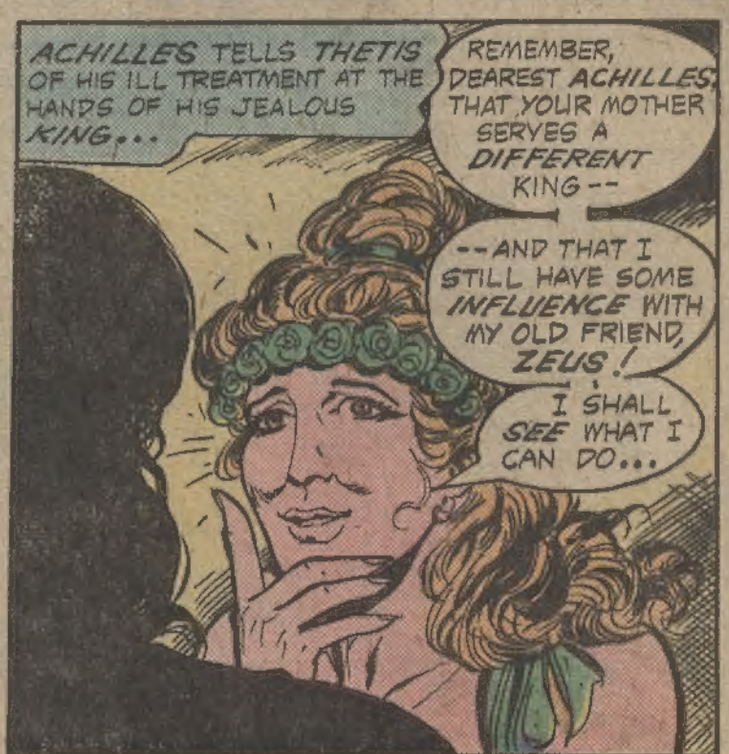
ACHILLES! CALL AN ASSEMBLY OF OUR COMMANDERS! WE HAVE A CRISIS TO DEAL WITH!
I SEE NO CRISIS--RETURN THE GIRL AND THE SICKNESS IS ENDED!
A KING IS ENTITLED TO THE SPOILS OF WAR! IF I SURRENDER CHRYSEIS I SHALL TAKE YOUR BRISEIS TO REPLACE HER!
AND THE DEMONS OF HADES TAKE YOU!
I CAME WITH MY WARRIORS FILLING FIFTY SHIPS TO HELP YOU IN THIS WRETCHED LITTLE WAR--
ACHILLES--CALM YOURSELF! HE'S THE KING!
--IF I AM TO BE INSULTED, PATROCLUS MY FRIEND, I'LL BE MY OWN KING!
PRESENTLY, ON THE DECK OF ACHILLES' LARGEST SHIP...
THE PLAGUE IS ENDED AND SO IS OUR PART IN THE SEIGE! ALL HANDS PREPARE TO SAIL AT THE FIRST FAVORABLE WIND!
BRISEIS, COME WITH ME TO--
ACHILLES! PARDON ME COMMANDER...
I COME FROM AGAMEMNON TO... TO CLAIM... UH, THE GIRL BRISEIS--
CLAIM ME? FOR WHAT? WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?!
YES, OF COURSE--IT MATTERS NO LONGER...
NO LONGER? WHAT DO YOU MEAN?! I DON'T WANT TO--
COME, GIRL... PLEASE... YOU MUST...
"YOU MUST"--WORDS THAT ACHILLES KNOWS WELL... A MAN WHOSE LIFE'S EVERY TURN WAS RULED BY--DESTINY EVEN BEFORE HIS BIRTH--

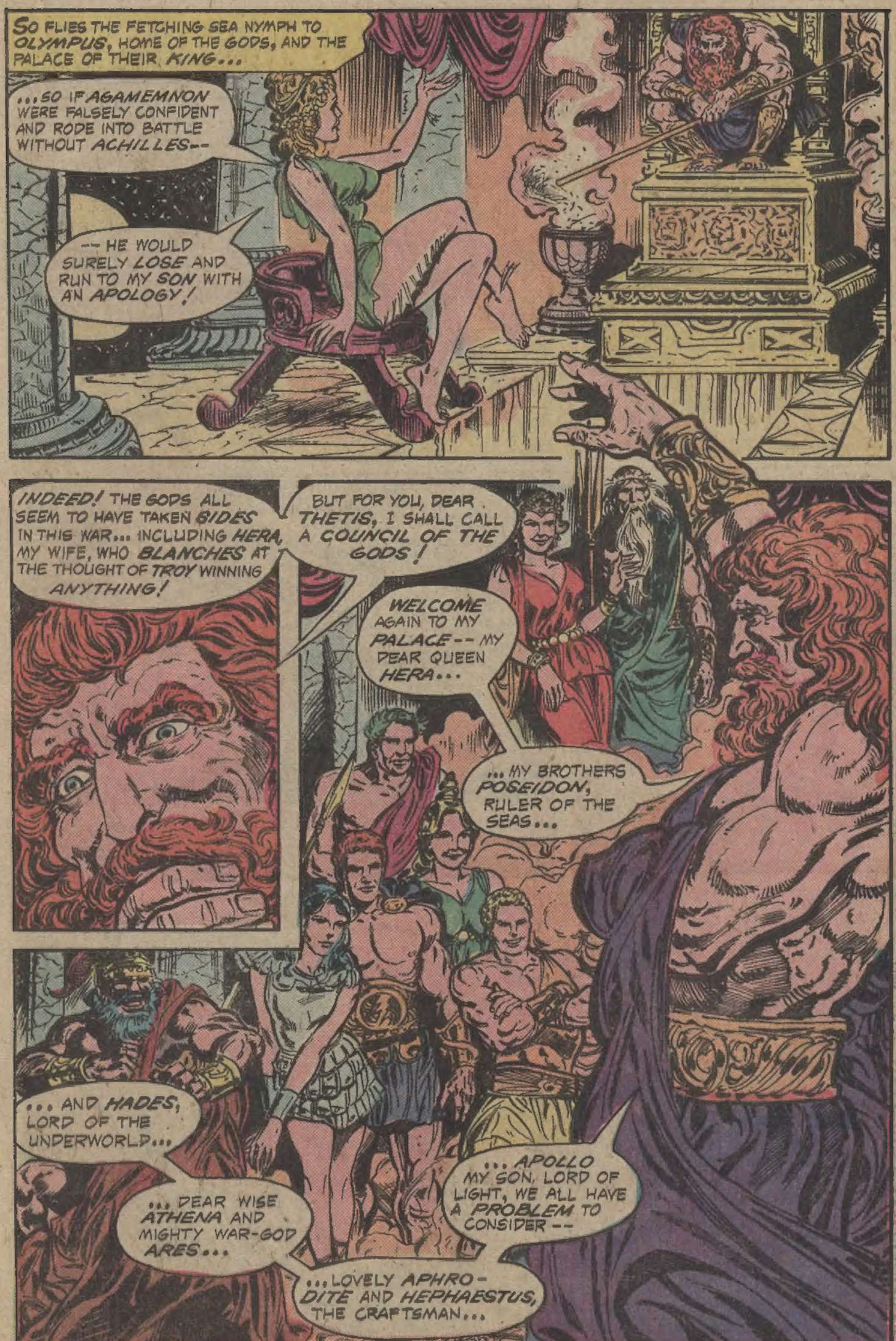

IT WAS DESTINY'S ORACLE WHO RULED THAT THE SON OF THE SEA NYMPH THETIS WOULD BE GREATER THAN HIS FATHER--
--WHICH WAS WHY, THOUGH SHE WAS LOVED BY ZEUS AND POSEIDON BOTH, SHE WAS GIVEN IN MARRIAGE TO PELEUS, A MORTAL...

THE BOY WAS DESTINED TO SHINE BRIGHTLY, BUT LIVE A SHORT LIFE...
LEGEND SAYS A DIP IN THE RIVER STYX...
...WILL MAKE SKIN IMPERVIOUS TO AN ENEMY'S WOUNDS!
...BUT SHE HELD HIM BY THE HEEL, WHICH WAS NEVER DIPPED IN THE MAGIC WATER!

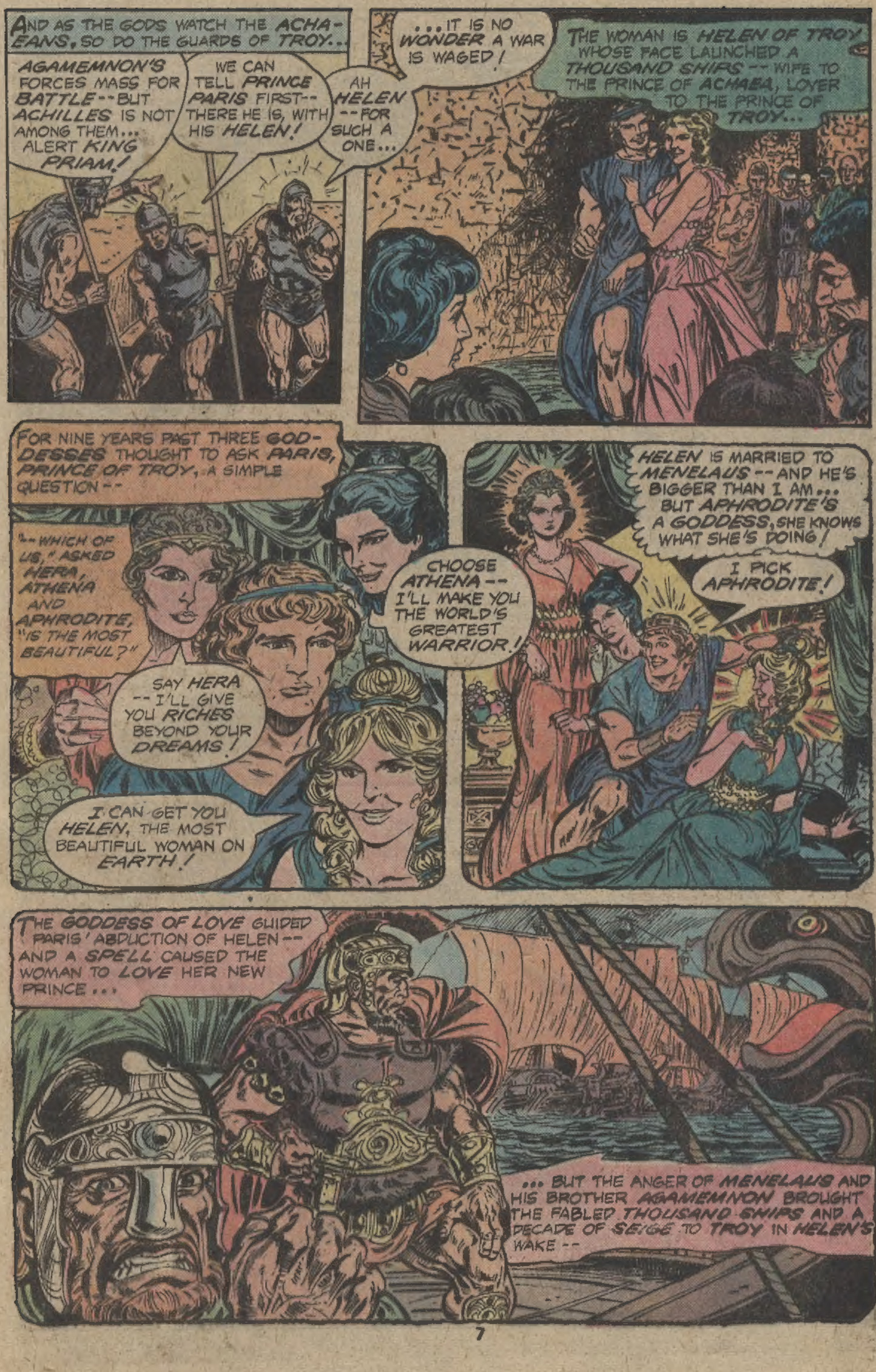
AND HE KNOWS IT IS HIS DESTINY TO DIE HERE --AT TROY-- WHEN THE CITY FALLS...
WHAT USE IS IT TO BE AMONG THE MIGHTY OF THE EARTH AND KNOW YOUR FATE--
--IF YOU ARE DOOMED TO PLAY IT OUT LIKE A PAWN IN A CHILD'S GAME?
ACHILLES! ACHILLES!

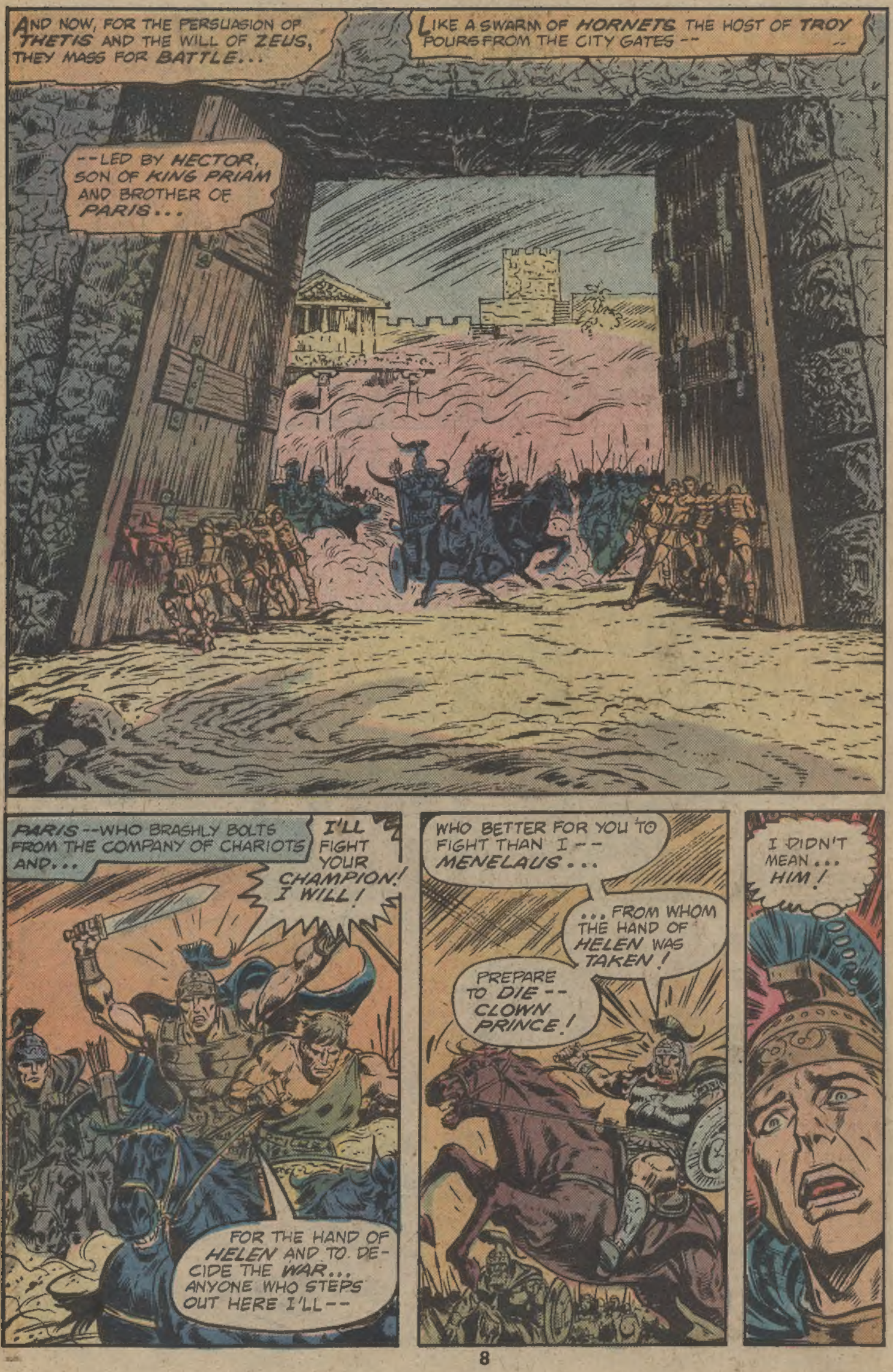
YOU ARE LOOKING POORLY MY BOY...
MOTHER--!
THESE DAYS ARE NOT GOING WELL FOR ME... AGAMEMNON BELIEVES HE CAN DO WITHOUT MY HELP!


ACHILLES TELLS THETIS OF HIS ILL TREATMENT AT THE HANDS OF HIS JEALOUS KING...
REMEMBER, DEAREST ACHILLES, THAT YOUR MOTHER SERVES A DIFFERENT KING--
--AND THAT I STILL HAVE SOME INFLUENCE WITH MY OLD FRIEND, ZEUS!
I SHALL SEE WHAT I CAN DO...

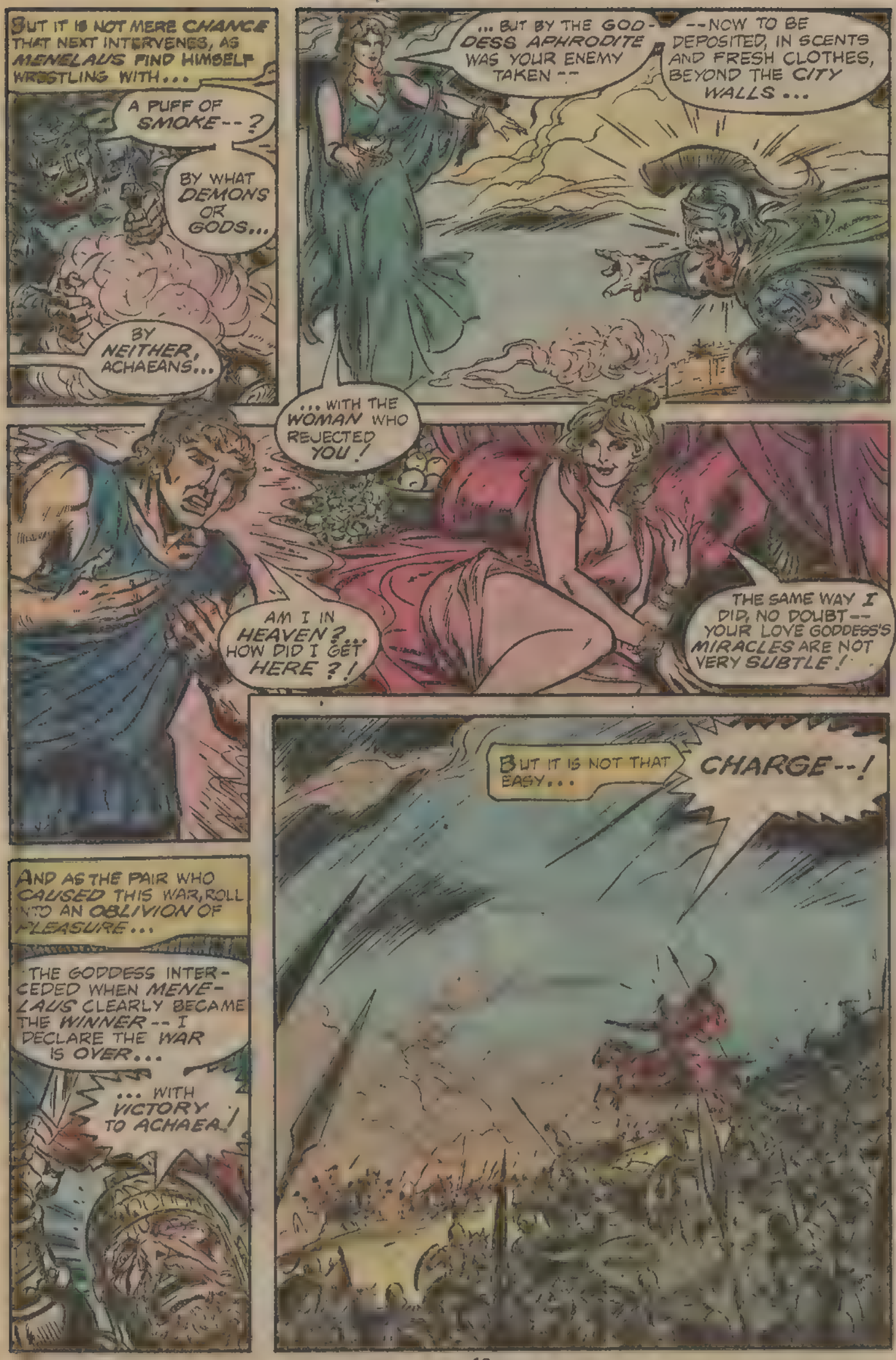

SO FLIES THE FETCHING SEA NYMPH TO OLYMPUS, HOME OF THE GODS, AND THE PALACE OF THEIR KING...
...SO IF AGAMEMNON WERE FALSELY CONFIDENT AND RODE INTO BATTLE WITHOUT ACHILLES--
-- HE WOULD SURELY LOSE AND RUN TO MY SON WITH AN APOLOGY!
INDEED! THE GODS ALL SEEM TO HAVE TAKEN SIDES IN THIS WAR... INCLUDING HERA, MY WIFE, WHO BLANCHES AT THE THOUGHT OF TROY WINNING ANYTHING!
BUT FOR YOU, DEAR THETIS, I SHALL CALL A COUNCIL OF THE GODS!
WELCOME AGAIN TO MY PALACE -- MY DEAR QUEEN HERA...
...MY BROTHERS POSEIDON, RULER OF THE SEAS...
...AND HADES, LORD OF THE UNDERWORLD...
...DEAR WISE ATHENA AND MIGHTY WAR-GOD ARES...
...APOLLO MY SON, LORD OF LIGHT, WE ALL HAVE A PROBLEM TO CONSIDER --
...LOVELY APHRODITE AND HEPHAESTUS, THE CRAFTSMAN...

THE ONLY PROBLEM IS WHEN AND HOW BEST TO DESTROY THE CITY OF TROY!
DESTINY TELLS US, AFTER ALL, THAT THE CITY MUST FALL!
YOU TWO ONLY TAKE THE SIDE OF THE ACHAEANS BECAUSE PARIS, TROY'S PRINCE THOUGHT I WAS LOVELIER THAN YOU!
I SAY FORGET THIS STANDOFF AND GET FIGHTING AGAIN!
THAT WOULD BE MORE INTERESTING --I DON'T CARE WHICH SIDE WINS... THOUGH I SUPPOSE I HAVE A GRUDGE AGAINST AGAMEMNON!
SINCE YOU ARE UNDECIDED, THEN I HAVE DECIDED THAT I SHALL SEND THE TWO SIDES INTO BATTLE--
--AND GIVE THE TROJANS THE ADVANTAGE!
BUT... TROY MUST LOSE! I PROTEST-!
I AM SURE YOU DO, MY DEAR... BUT I AM THE KING, YOU SEE!
SURELY TROY MUST LOSE THE WAR... BUT NOT EVERY BATTLE!
SO IS THE HAND OF ZEUS UPON THE HEAD OF KING AGAMEMNON AS HE SLEEPS THIS NIGHT...
... BRINGING FALSE VISIONS OF VICTORY AND GLORY CLOSE AT HAND -
--SO THAT WHEN NEXT DAWN STRIDES QUEEN-LIKE THROUGH THE CAMP OF THE ACHAENS...
AWAKE, SONS OF ACHAEA...
... RISE, ODYSSEUS -- OUT OF YOUR TENT DIOMEDES -- UP MENELAUS...
... YOUR KING CALLS YOU TO BATTLE!


AND AS THE GODS WATCH THE ACHAEANS, SO DO THE GUARDS OF TROY...
AGAMEMNON'S FORCES MASS FOR BATTLE--BUT ACHILLES IS NOT AMONG THEM... ALERT KING PRIAM!
WE CAN TELL PRINCE PARIS FIRST--THERE HE IS, WITH HIS HELEN!
AH HELEN --FOR SUCH A ONE...
...IT IS NO WONDER A WAR IS WAGED!
THE WOMAN IS HELEN OF TROY WHOSE FACE LAUNCHED A THOUSAND SHIPS -- WIFE TO THE PRINCE OF ACHAEA, LOVER TO THE PRINCE OF TROY...
FOR NINE YEARS PAST THREE GODDESSES THOUGHT TO ASK PARIS, PRINCE OF TROY, A SIMPLE QUESTION --
"--WHICH OF US," ASKED HERA, ATHENA AND APHRODITE, "IS THE MOST BEAUTIFUL?"
SAY HERA -- I'LL GIVE YOU RICHES BEYOND YOUR DREAMS!
CHOOSE ATHENA -- I'LL MAKE YOU THE WORLD'S GREATEST WARRIOR!
I CAN GET YOU HELEN, THE MOST BEAUTIFUL WOMAN ON EARTH!
HELEN IS MARRIED TO MENELAUS -- AND HE'S BIGGER THAN I AM... BUT APHRODITE'S A GODDESS, SHE KNOWS WHAT SHE'S DOING!
I PICK APHRODITE!
THE GODDESS OF LOVE GUIDED PARIS' ABDUCTION OF HELEN -- AND A SPELL CAUSED THE WOMAN TO LOVE HER NEW PRINCE...
... BUT THE ANGER OF MENELAUS AND HIS BROTHER AGAMEMNON BROUGHT THE FABLED THOUSAND SHIPS AND A DECADE OF SEIGE TO TROY IN HELEN'S WAKE --


AND NOW, FOR THE PERSUASION OF THETIS AND THE WILL OF ZEUS, THEY MASS FOR BATTLE...
LIKE A SWARM OF HORNETS THE HOST OF TROY POURS FROM THE CITY GATES --
--LED BY HECTOR, SON OF KING PRIAM AND BROTHER OF PARIS...
PARIS --WHO BRASHLY BOLTS FROM THE COMPANY OF CHARIOTS AND...
I'LL FIGHT YOUR CHAMPION! I WILL!
FOR THE HAND OF HELEN AND TO DECIDE THE WAR... ANYONE WHO STEPS OUT HERE I'LL --
WHO BETTER FOR YOU TO FIGHT THAN I -- MENELAUS...
...FROM WHOM THE HAND OF HELEN WAS TAKEN!
PREPARE TO DIE -- CLOWN PRINCE!
I DIDN'T MEAN... HIM!

BUT THE CHALLENGE IS THROWN AND MUST BE HONORED--AS PARIS APPROACHES MENELAUS IN THE FIELD BETWEEN THE TWO ARMIES...
AGAINST THE ACHAEAN WARRIOR, PRINCE PARIS KNOWS HE IS OUTMATCHED...
... FOR EVEN AS, BY CHANCE, MENELAUS' WEAPONS ARE RENDERED USELESS...
... THE WRONGED HUSBAND CHARGES AT THE ARMED TROJAN LIKE A MADMAN, CHOKING PARIS ON THE CHIN STRAP OF HIS OWN HELMET--

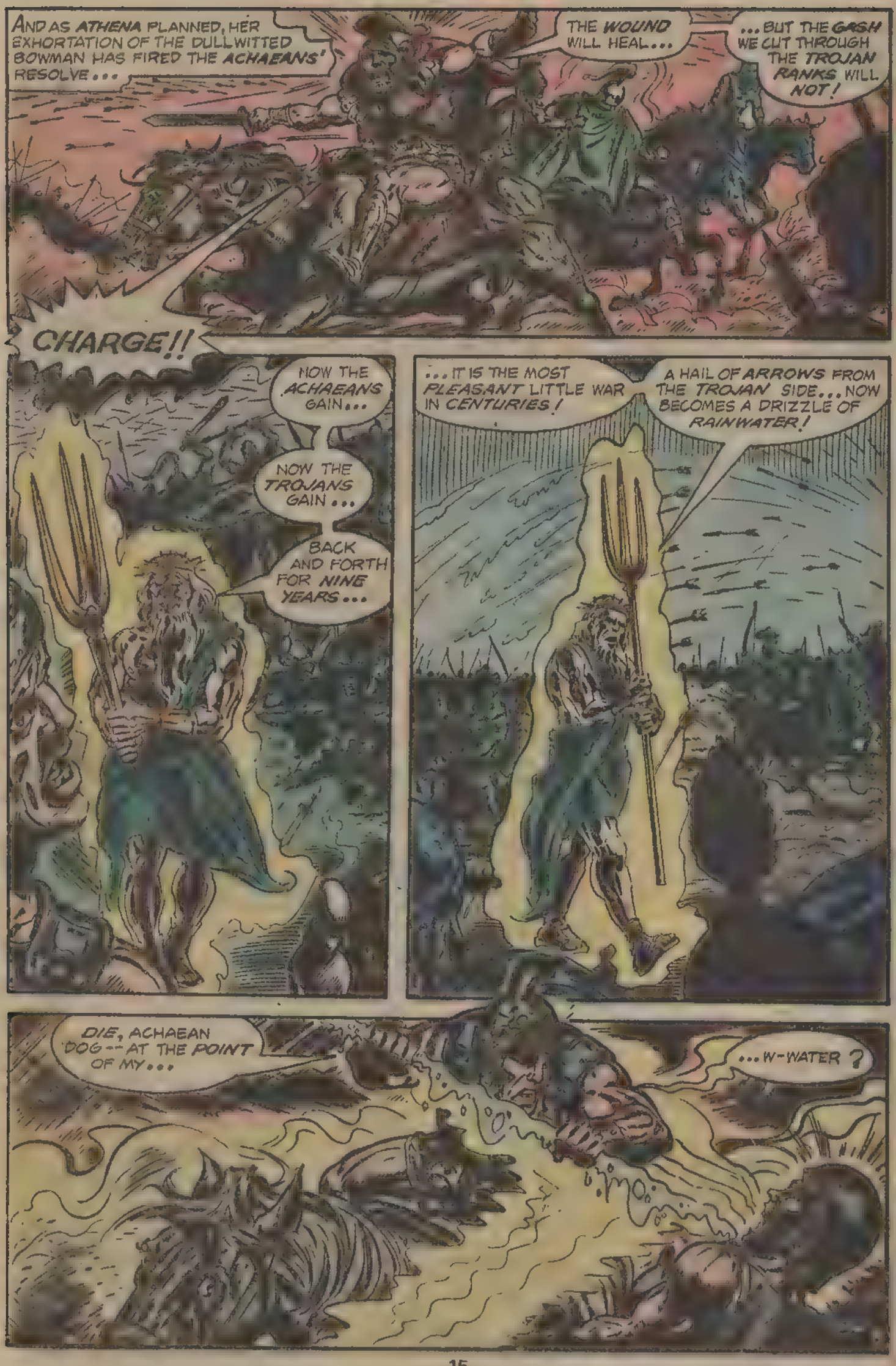

BUT IT IS NOT MERE CHANCE THAT NEXT INTERVENES, AS MENELAUS FIND HIMSELF WRESTLING WITH...
A PUFF OF SMOKE--?
BY WHAT DEMONS OR GODS...
BY NEITHER, ACHAEANS...
... BUT BY THE GODDESS APHRODITE WAS YOUR ENEMY TAKEN --
--NOW TO BE DEPOSITED, IN SCENTS AND FRESH CLOTHES, BEYOND THE CITY WALLS ...
... WITH THE WOMAN WHO REJECTED YOU!
AM I IN HEAVEN?... HOW DID I GET HERE?!
THE SAME WAY I DID, NO DOUBT-- YOUR LOVE GODDESS'S MIRACLES ARE NOT VERY SUBTLE!
BUT IT IS NOT THAT EASY...
CHARGE--!
AND AS THE PAIR WHO CAUSED THIS WAR, ROLL INTO AN OBLIVION OF PLEASURE...
THE GODDESS INTERCEDED WHEN MENELAUS CLEARLY BECAME THE WINNER -- I DECLARE THE WAR IS OVER...
... WITH VICTORY TO ACHAEA!

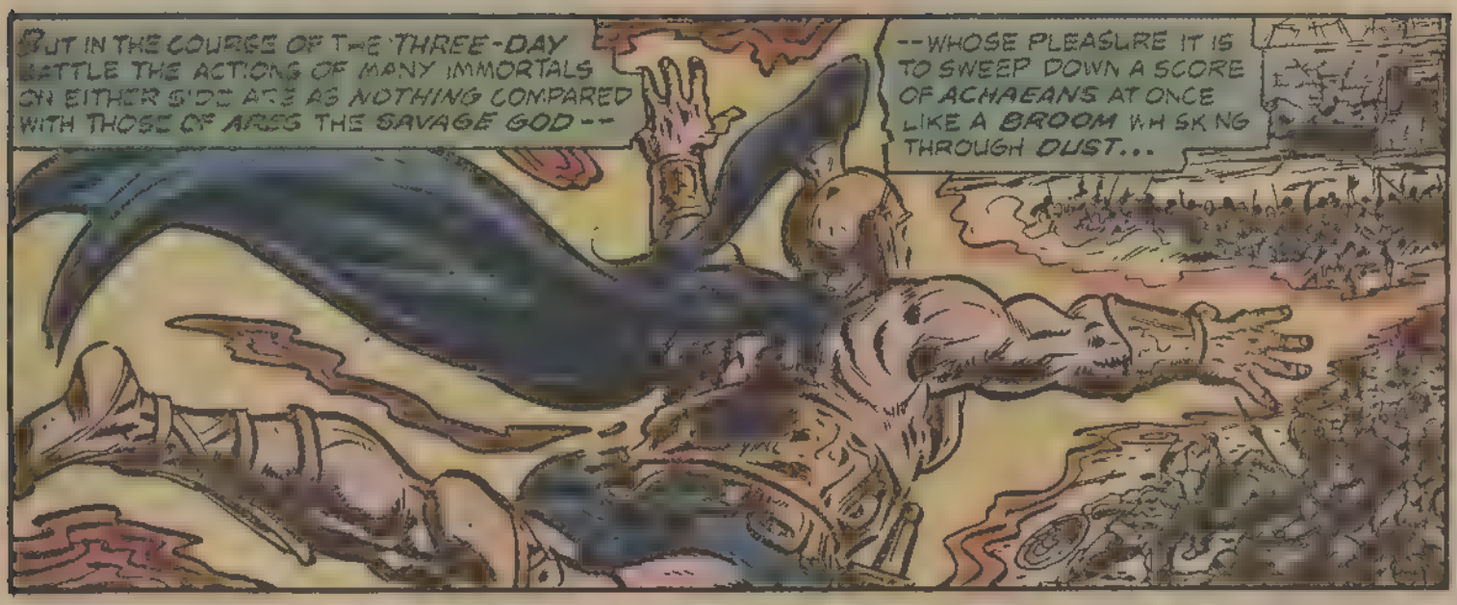
AND THE GODS OF OLYMPUS, AS ALWAYS, WATCH THE FOLLIES OF HUMANITY AND ITCH TO PLAY THEIR GAMES...
I SUGGEST THAT SINCE PARIS LOST THE DUEL WE AWARD THE WAR TO AGAMEMNON--AND RETURN HELEN TO MENELAUS!
AND LEAVE TROY STANDING? DESTINY RULED THAT TROY WILL SOON FALL--WE MUST LET THE ACHAEANS DESTROY IT!
WITHOUT ACHILLES, TROY IS CLEARLY SUPERIOR! I SAY LET THE TROJANS PROVE THEMSELVES!
BROTHER ZEUS, THE CITY MUST BE SACKED! HOW CAN THE WAR BE ENDED WITHOUT SACKING THE CITY?
IT IS THE WAY OF COWARDICE YOU PROPOSE! HOW ARE THESE MORTALS TO LEARN RESPONSIBILITY IF YOU STOP THEM?
FINE! THE WAR CONTINUES... BUT WE MUST STAY OUT OF IT!
MANY A BRAVE MAN FALLS THIS DAY, HIS ARMOR CLATTERING ABOUT HIM...
AND AS DUSK BEGINS TO FALL, PARIS REAPPEARS AT THE SIDE OF HIS BROTHER HECTOR...
I SEE YOUR AFFAIRS OF STATE ARE COMPLETED FOR THE DAY, BROTHER.
THE BATTLE GOES WELL FOR TROY...

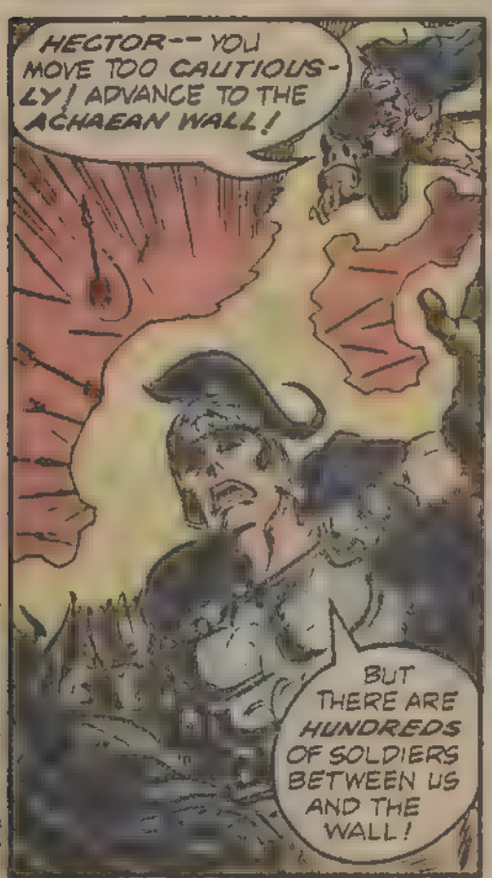
CONTRARY TO THE WILL OF ZEUS, THERE ARE MORE THAN MEN FIGHTING THIS BATTLE...
DO NOT ENGAGE IN FRIVOLITIES DURING BATTLE, HECTOR-- RALLY YOUR TROOPS!
ARES--GOD OF WAR!
YES, YOU KNOW ME WELL!
GUIDED BY THE CRUELEST AND MOST SAVAGE OF THE OLYMPIANS...
... HECTOR SLICES THROUGH THE ACHAEAN RANKS LIKE THE PRONGS OF A FORK THROUGH CAKE --
--AS ACHILLES AND HIS FRIEND PATROCLUS ARE OTHERWISE OCCUPIED...
ACTUALLY I PREFER SWORDS AND SPEARS TO THESE TRINKETS -- REAL MEN SHOULD SEE EACH OTHERS EYES WHEN THEY FIGHT...
THE SOUNDS OF BATTLE ARE CLOSER NOW--
-- THE ARMIES OF THE ENEMY MUST BE ADVANCING!
... BUT ALL BASIC FIGHTING SKILLS MUST BE MASTERED -- PAY HEED, PATROCLUS!

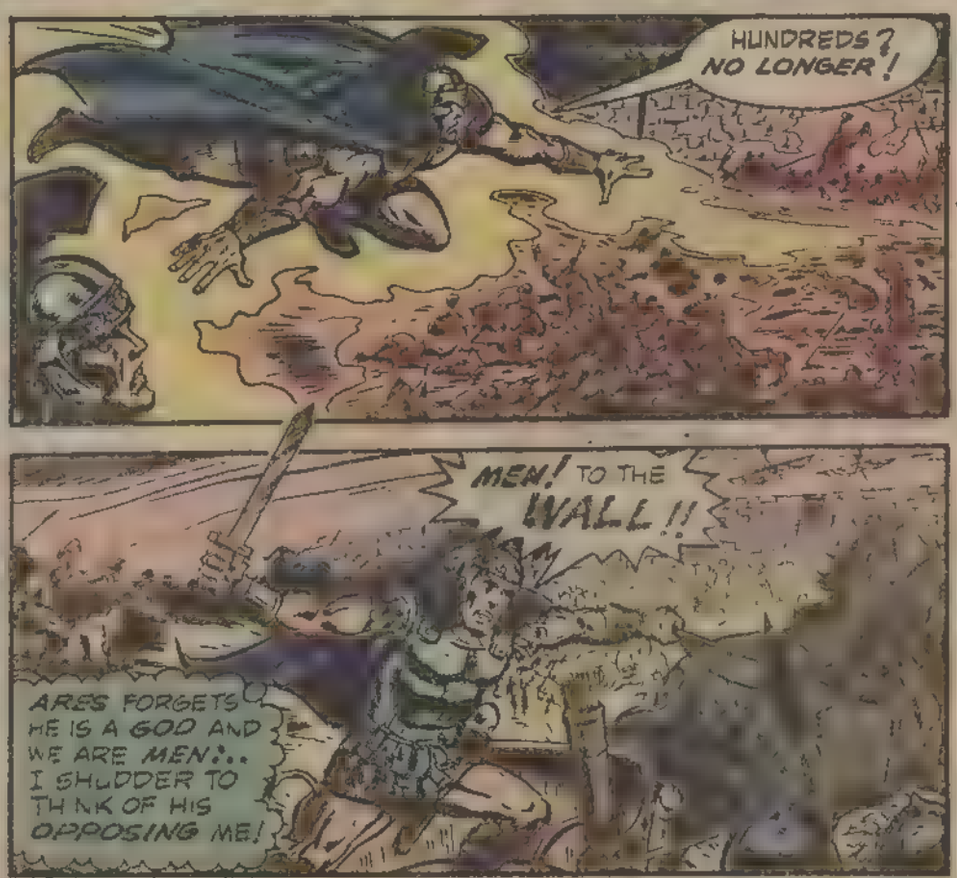
OF COURSE IT IS NOT FAIR... IS ANYTHING ARES DOES FAIR?
HE MUST FIGHT, IT IS HIS NATURE-- AND HE FIGHTS TO WIN!
TELLING HIM TO STAY AWAY IS LIKE TELLING A WOLF TO IGNORE A CHILD ABANDONED IN A WOOD!
IF ARES CAN FIGHT FOR TROY IT FOLLOWS THAT WE CAN FIGHT FOR ACHAEA!
I CARE NOT FOR FIGHTING -- BUT AS QUEEN OF THE GODS I DEMAND THAT YOU DESTROY THE CITY!
DO AS YOU WILL -- I WILL NOT LIFT A HAND AGAINST TROY, OR ARES...
...OR YOU!
EVEN AS OX-EYED HERA AND WISE ATHENA RACE EAGERLY INTO THE RAGING BATTLE...
...WORD SEEMS TO TRAVEL AMONG THE GODS, THAT THEY MAY NOW JOIN IN THE MORTALS' GAMES OF DEATH AND DESTRUCTION--
POSEIDON, BROTHER OF ZEUS AND LORD OF THE SEAS, JOINS HERA AND ATHENA ON THE ACHAEAN SIDE --
--AS DOES HEPHAESTUS, THE LAME GOD, RULER OF FIRE AND PATRON TO CRAFTSMEN--
--WHILE THE LOVERS ARES AND APHRODITE FIGHT FOR THE TROJANS--
--WITH APOLLO, WHOSE CHARIOT CARRIES THE SUN--
--WHILE THETIS THE SEA NYMPH CARES ONLY FOR THE PRESTIGE OF HER SON--
--AND HADES SIMPLY SITS AND WAITS FOR THE DEAD SENT BY BOTH SIDES...

BUT THE BATTLE IS ALREADY UNDER WAY AS THE TROJAN COMMANDER LEADS HIS CHARGE...
YOU -- PANDARUS! DROP BEHIND THE LINES AND BRING FRESH HORSES!
BUT... BUT... YES, HECTOR!
THAT SENTENTIOUS DANDY! IMAGINE SENDING YOU TO WATER THE HORSES IN THE HEAT OF BATTLE--
ESPECIALLY WHEN MENELAUS IS ABOUT TO BE EXPOSED...
WHA-- MENELAUS?
I SEE HIM GALLOP BEHIND A LINE OF MEN... HE WILL BE IN THE CLEAR--
--NOW!
ARGGHH! -- I AM HIT!
HE WAS RIDING TOWARD THE REAR --TO SEE TO THE SAFETY OF THE DOCTORS!
WHAT TROJAN COWARD DID THIS--?

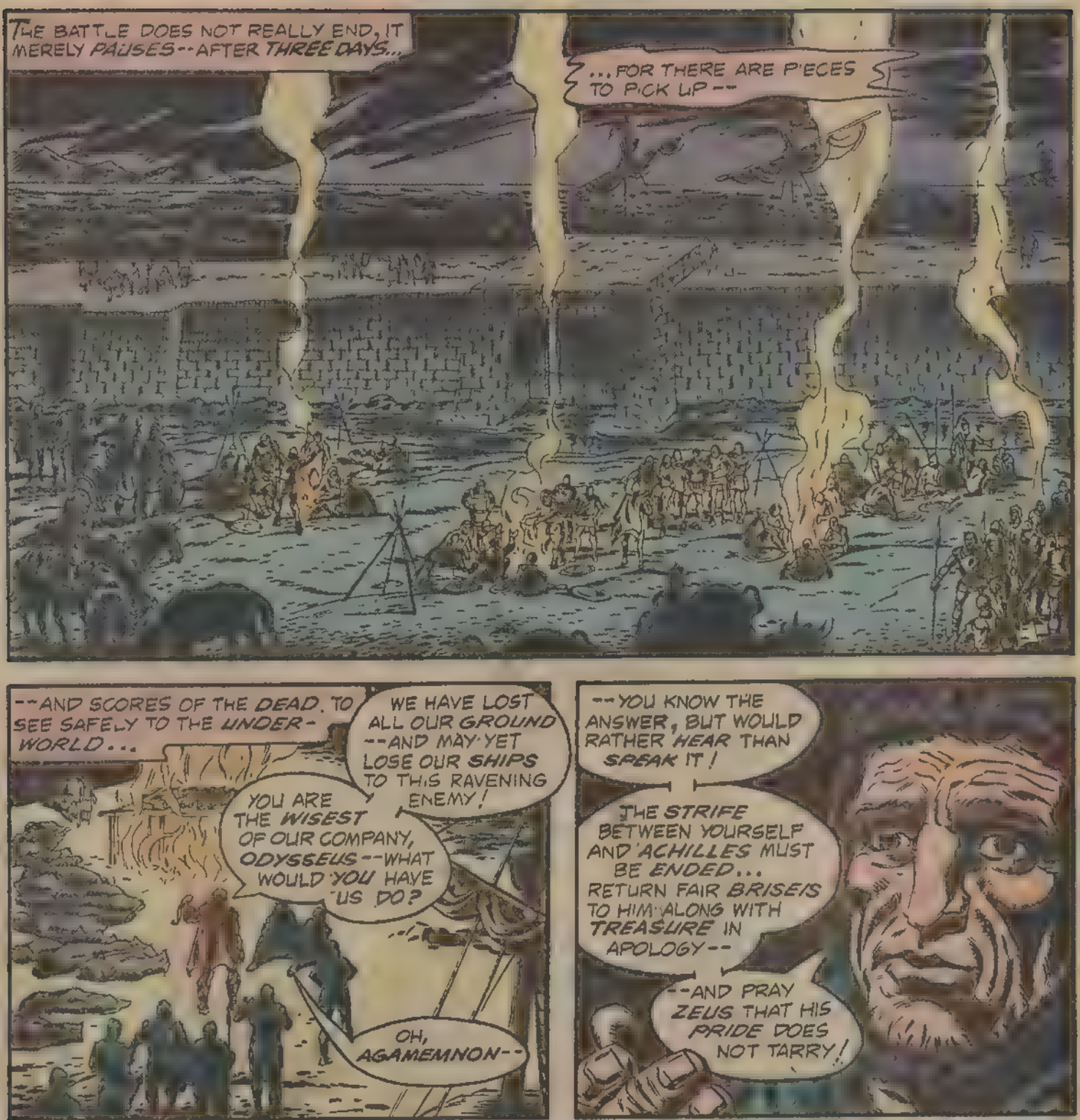

AND AS ATHENA PLANNED, HER EXHORTATION OF THE DULLWITTED BOWMAN HAS FIRED THE ACHAEANS' RESOLVE...
THE WOUND WILL HEAL...
...BUT THE GASH WE CUT THROUGH THE TROJAN RANKS WILL NOT!
CHARGE!!
NOW THE ACHAEANS GAIN...
NOW THE TROJANS GAIN...
BACK AND FORTH FOR NINE YEARS...
...IT IS THE MOST PLEASANT LITTLE WAR IN CENTURIES!
A HAIL OF ARROWS FROM THE TROJAN SIDE...NOW BECOMES A DRIZZLE OF RAINWATER!
DIE, ACHAEAN DOG--AT THE POINT OF MY...
...W-WATER?


BUT IN THE COURSE OF THE THREE-DAY BATTLE THE ACTIONS OF MANY IMMORTALS ON EITHER SIDE ARE AS NOTHING COMPARED WITH THOSE OF ARES THE SAVAGE GOD --
--WHOSE PLEASURE IT IS TO SWEEP DOWN A SCORE OF ACHAEANS AT ONCE LIKE A BROOM WHISKING THROUGH DUST...


HECTOR-- YOU MOVE TOO CAUTIOUSLY! ADVANCE TO THE ACHAEAN WALL!
BUT THERE ARE HUNDREDS OF SOLDIERS BETWEEN US AND THE WALL!


HUNDREDS? NO LONGER!
MEN! TO THE WALL!!
ARES FORGETS HE IS A GOD AND WE ARE MEN... I SHUDDER TO THINK OF HIS OPPOSING ME!

CLOSE RANKS! RETREAT OVER THE DRAWBRIDGE!
DO NOT LET HECTOR BEYOND THE WALL!


THE BATTLE DOES NOT REALLY END, IT MERELY PAUSES--AFTER THREE DAYS...
...FOR THERE ARE P'ECES TO PICK UP--

--AND SCORES OF THE DEAD, TO SEE SAFELY TO THE UNDER-WORLD...
WE HAVE LOST ALL OUR GROUND --AND MAY YET LOSE OUR SHIPS TO THIS RAVENING ENEMY!
YOU ARE THE WISEST OF OUR COMPANY, ODYSSEUS--WHAT WOULD YOU HAVE US DO?
OH, AGAMEMNON--

--YOU KNOW THE ANSWER, BUT WOULD RATHER HEAR THAN SPEAK IT!
THE STRIFE BETWEEN YOURSELF AND ACHILLES MUST BE ENDED... RETURN FAIR BRISEIS TO HIM ALONG WITH TREASURE IN APOLOGY--
--AND PRAY ZEUS THAT HIS PRIDE DOES NOT TARRY!

YOU MUST BRING ACHILLES MY MESSAGE!
I SHALL CALL A COUNCIL OF THE GODS--
--IT IS TIME TO BRING THIS CARNAGE TO A CLOSE!

THIS MUST BE BROUGHT TO A STOP ...IT IS BRUTAL AND BELOW THE DIGNITY EVEN OF MORTALS!
DUELS WILL BE FOUGHT, TROY WILL FALL AND THAT WILL END IT!
I PROTEST, BROTHER KING... DOES NOT DESTINY DICTATE A WAR RATHER THAN A FIAT BY A GOD?
MOST OF YOU FORGET THAT YOU ARE GODS--YOU ABUSE YOUR POWER LIKE MEN--
--SO LET THERE BE WAR...
...BUT LET ANY OF YOU TAKE A FURTHER HAND IN IT, AND YOU SHALL HAVE THE POWER OF ZEUS WITH WHICH TO CONTEND!

AS ON EARTH, IN THE LULL BETWEEN GAMES OF THE GODS...
YOU ARE WISE, ODYSSEUS -- SURELY YOU ALREADY KNOW MY ANSWER!
FOR ALL AGAMEMNON'S TREASURE, FOR FAIR BRISEIS ... EVEN FOR AN APOLOGY I CANNOT RETURN!
WITH ALL MY VAUNTED WISDOM I CANNOT HOPE TO KNOW WHAT A YOUNG MAN SUCH AS YOURSELF WILL DO...
...YOUR LIFE IS RULED BY A WHIM YOU CALL PRIDE -- NOT BY REASON! BUT HEED...
...FOR MANY A BRAVE ACHAEAN HAS FALLEN FOR YOUR INACTION!
AGAMEMNON HAS DONE WHAT HE COULD TO SEE THIS END -- SO MUST YOU!
I MUST DO NOTHING...
...SAVE AWAIT A FAVORABLE WIND TO SAIL MY FIFTY SHIPS HOME!
NOW I HEAR THE SOUNDS OF BATTLE NOT SO FAR OFF... THEY CALL YOU, ODYSSEUS -- NOT ME!
I HOPE ONLY THAT MY WIND ARRIVES...
...BEFORE AGAMEMNON'S FOES REACH MY SHIPS!
I WILL SEE YOU AGAIN, ACHILLES!
I DO NOT SEE WHY YOU EVEN KEEP BRISEIS AWAY... I LIKED HER --

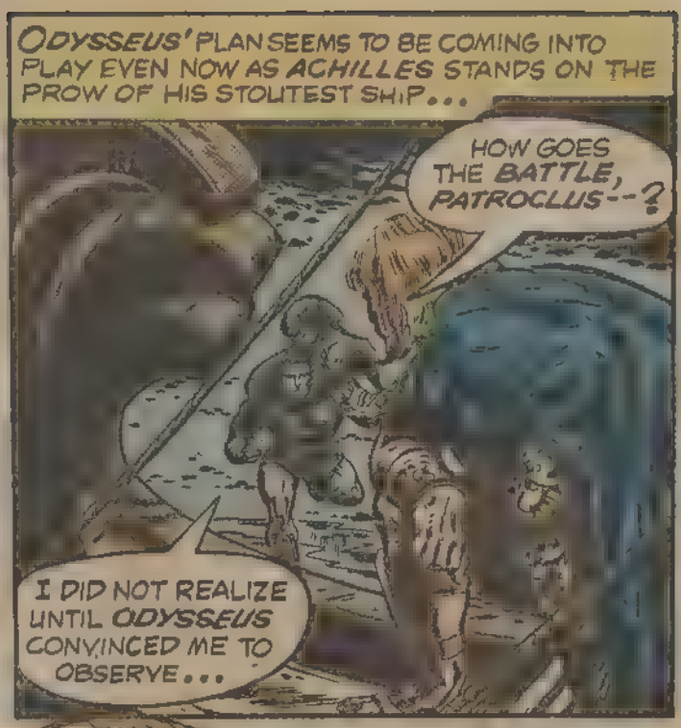
INDEED, THE BATTLE RAGES ON THE VERY WALLS OF THE ACHAEAN SHIPS, WHERE A SCURRYING OLD MAN SPREADS GLIMMERING HOPE OF ACHAEAN TRIUMPH...
TAKE HEART! TAKE HEART! VICTORY IS IN SIGHT...
IT IS DARKEST BEFORE THE DAWN...
THERE IS A LIGHT AT THE END OF THE -- EH?
POSEIDON -- I SEE YOU ARE DISGUISED... I HAVE AN IDEA...
HERA...?
DEAR HUSBAND... MY BEHAVIOR HAS BEEN MOST UNSEEMLY --
HERA...?
-- I WOULD LIKE TO... CORRECT MYSELF...
WHOM THEY LORD
AND WITH THE KING OF THE GODS DISTRACTED...
KNOW IT IS THEIR CHANCE...
POSEIDON AND THE OTHERS ON THE ACHAEAN SIDE...
TO FIGHT IN EARNEST--!

LED BY THE LORD OF THE EARTHQUAKE AND THE ROLLING WAVES THE ACHAEAN PLUNGE BOLDLY INTO THE TROJAN RANKS...
...AND MIGHTY HECTOR IS CAST FAR AWAY WOUNDED, FELLED BY THE BOULDER OF THE ROMAEAN AIAS --

WAVES DO NOT THUNDER MORE LOUDLY WHEN DRIVEN BY THE BREATH OF THE WIND GOD...
NOR DO THE FLAMES OF A FOREST FIRE ROAR MORE FIERCELY WHEN IT IS WELL ALIGHT ON THE MOUNTAINS...
NOR DOES THE HURRICANE BELLOW WITH RUDER MUSIC AS IT TEARS THROUGH THE TOPS OF THE OAKS...
... THAN THE TERRIBLE SHOUT WHICH THE VALIANT ACHAEANS RAISED WHEN THEY SPRANG UPON LEADERLESS TROY --

BACK--BACK--BACK AWAY FROM THE ACHAEAN SHIPS DID THE LINE OF BATTLE MOVE...
AS HECTOR STRUGGLES TO RECOVER HIS STRENGTH--
--AND THE TEMPORARY LEADER OF ADVANCING ARMIES MEETS WITH A SETBACK...
DESIST--!
BY WHOSE FOUL HAND--
BY THE HAND OF ZEUS ... THE HAND THAT WILL SEE YOU UNDONE, BROTHER GOD OR NO, UNLESS YOU RETURN TO THE SEA!
SAVE YOUR SPANKING FOR YOUR CHILDREN AND YOUR SISTERS-- I WILL GO KNOWING MY TIME HAS BEEN SPENT WELL!
THE SEA KING ONCE AGAIN BECOMES AN OBSERVER, AND THE TROJAN PRINCE AGAIN BECOMES A LEADER...
MY STAY BEHIND THE WALLS HAS PROVIDED OUR SOLDIERS A FINE REST--
-- WE SHALL TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE ACHAEANS' NEW-FOUND SECURITY...
...TO DRIVE THEM INTO THE SEA!

AND FROM THE BATTLEMENTS BEFORE THE ACHAEAN SHIPS...
THE BATTLE GOES BADLY AGAIN, ODYSSEUS--SOON THE TROJANS WILL AGAIN BE AT OUR WALL!
IF ONLY FLEET-FOOTED ACHILLES WOULD ACCEPT MY APOLOGY...
THERE IS HOPE, AGAMEMNON--IF MY PLAN IS SUCCESSFUL--


ODYSSEUS' PLAN SEEMS TO BE COMING INTO PLAY EVEN NOW AS ACHILLES STANDS ON THE PROW OF HIS STOUTEST SHIP...
HOW GOES THE BATTLE, PATROCLUS--?
I DID NOT REALIZE UNTIL ODYSSEUS CONVINCED ME TO OBSERVE...

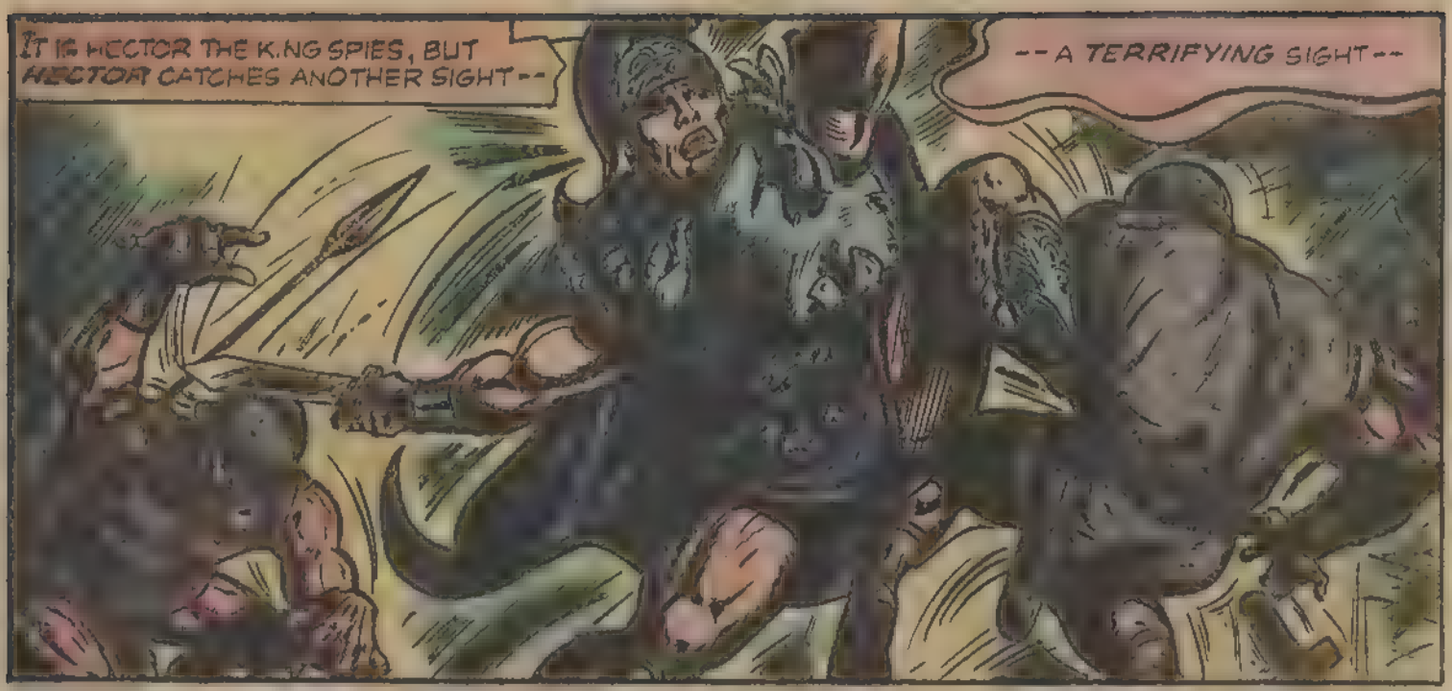
...HOW DEMORALIZED ARE THE ACHAEANS WITHOUT YOU--
--THEY HAVE ONLY FOUGHT WELL WHEN POSEIDON DEFIED ZEUS HIMSELF TO AID THEM!

IF ODYSSEUS HAS CONVINCED YOU TO URGE ME INTO--
NO NO NO! NOTHING LIKE THAT--BUT YOU DO NOT REALLY WANT THE ACHAEANS TO LOSE, DO YOU?

OF COURSE NOT--BUT I SEE NOTHING I CAN DO AFTER AGAMEMNON'S INSULT OTHER THAN DEFEND MY OWN SHIPS!
PERHAPS THERE IS SOMETHING YOU CAN DO--

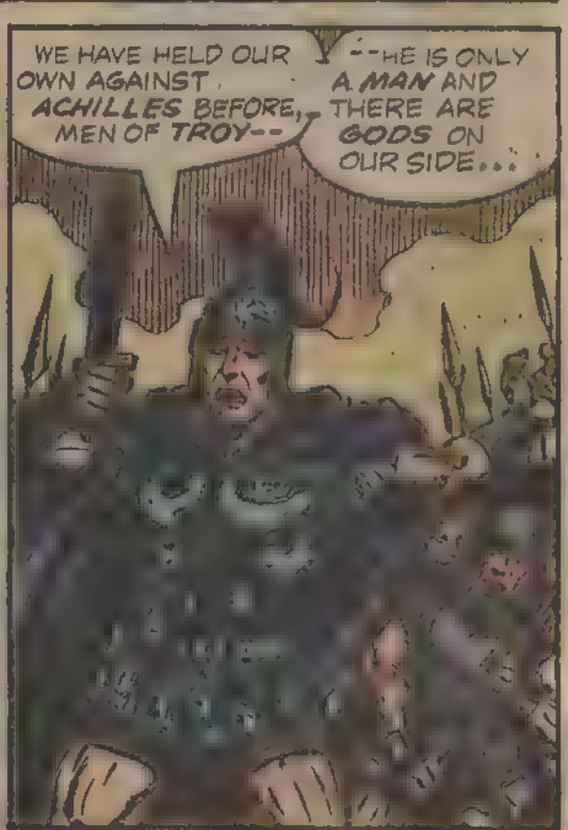
--YOU SEE, I HAVE AN IDEA...

MEANWHILE, ON A MOUNTAINTOP NEAR THE SCENE OF BATTLE...
YOU HAVE UPSET THE NATURAL COURSE OF EVENTS!
YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR POSEIDON'S ENTERING ON THE SIDE OF ACHAEA!
I DO NOT APOLOGIZE FOR DECEIVING YOU-- I WAS SIMPLY OBEYING THE WILL OF DESTINY WHICH HAS RULED FOR TROY'S FALL!
AND YOU, HERA, MADE IT NECESSARY FOR ME TO INTERVENE!
OF COURSE TROY WILL FALL! SO WILL OLYMPUS ITSELF -- EVENTUALLY...
... BUT IT IS MY RESPONSIBILITY TO CARRY OUT THE WILL OF DESTINY--
-- AND YOURS TO OBEY YOUR HUSBAND AND KING!
I HAVE DISPATCHED MY SON APOLLO TO AID THE TROJANS...
... AND RESTORE THE NATURAL COURSE OF BATTLE!
TROJANS --UP THE LADDER... I AM PROTECTING YOUR PASSAGE AS I HEALED HECTOR'S WOUNDS!
AS ON THE BEACH SIDE OF THE ACHAEAN WALL, THE FIGHTING IS ALREADY HAND-TO-HAND...
UNHAND MY SHIP, TROJAN PIG!
IS THAT HECTOR HIMSELF... ON THIS SIDE OF OUR WALL--?


IT IS HECTOR THE KING SPIES, BUT HECTOR CATCHES ANOTHER SIGHT--
--A TERRIFYING SIGHT--

EE-YAHH! MOVE, HORSES!
WE HAVE A JOB TO DO!

IT S NOT REALLY ACHILLES WEARING THE ARMOR OF PELEUS--
--BUT PATROCLUS HAS ALL THE RIGHT MOVES!

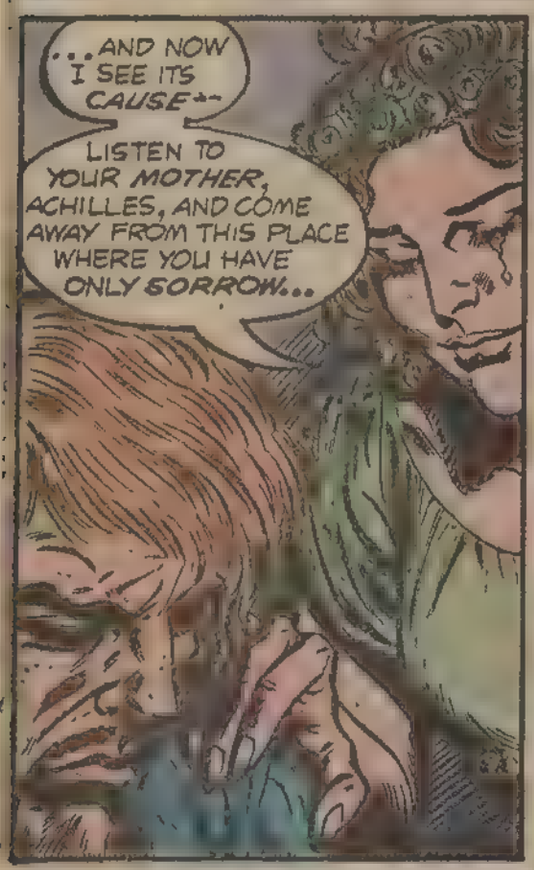

WE HAVE HELD OUR OWN AGAINST ACHILLES BEFORE, MEN OF TROY--
--HE IS ONLY A MAN AND THERE ARE GODS ON OUR SIDE...

BUT THE FORCES OF ACHAEA ARE FIRED BY THE DISGUISED PATROCLUS' PRESENCE EVEN BEFORE HE REACHES THE FRONT...
...AND WHEN HE DOES REACH THE FRONT HE PERFORMS PRODIGIOUSLY--

AIIIEEE...!

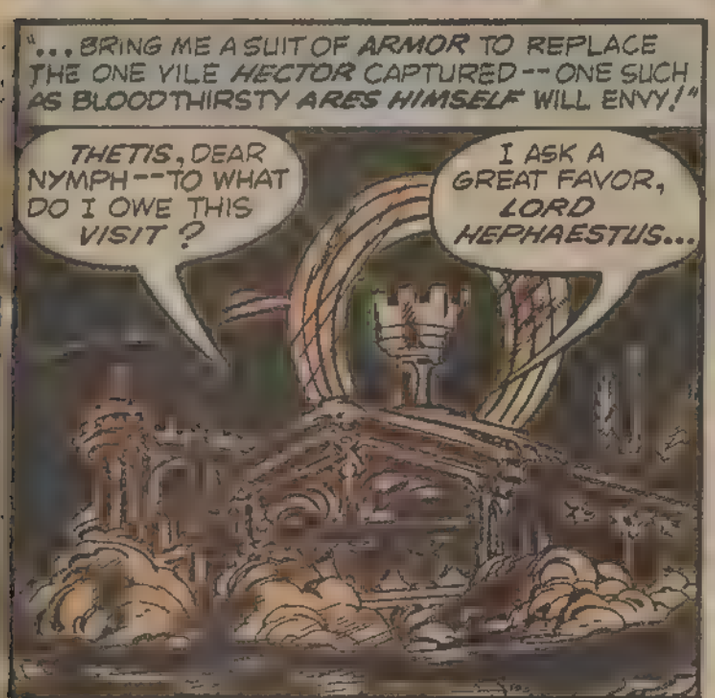
...AND HECTOR TOOK YOUR ARMOR!
EVEN NOW THEY ARE FIGHTING OVER THE BODY!
I'LL KILL HIM!!
WE WILL ALL DIE BEFORE WE LET YOU DEFILE PATROCLUS' BODY!
I SHALL HOLD YOU TO THAT BOAST!
LOOK! BEHIND THE ACHAEANS!
MANY TIMES OVER THE NINE PREVIOUS YEARS HAD THE TROJAN HOST HEARD THE FEARSOME BATTLE CRY OF MIGHTY ACHILLES--BUT NEVER...
EEYAHH-HAAIEEE
...NEVER HAD A SOUND SUCH AS THIS SHATTERED THE AIR ACROSS THE TROJAN PLAIN--
--AND THE TACTIC WORKS...
IT'S THE REAL ONE THIS TIME!
NO! HE HASN'T EVEN ANY ARMOR! STAY!
OH PATROCLUS... FRIEND--
WHY?
WHY?
WHY--?

WHY, PATROCLUS --WHY?
I HAVE HEARD THE MOANING OF MY CHILD...


...AND NOW I SEE ITS CAUSE--
LISTEN TO YOUR MOTHER, ACHILLES, AND COME AWAY FROM THIS PLACE WHERE YOU HAVE ONLY SORROW...

...RETURN WITH ME TO YOUR AGED FATHER'S HOUSE! SPEND TIME WITH YOUR SON--
--OVERSEE THE FIELD WORKERS... CONCERN YOURSELF FOR A TIME WITH--
NO--!

I WILL NOT ACCEPT THE LIFE OF A COUNTRY SQUIRE GROWING FAT AND GROSS ON THE SWEAT OF OTHERS!
I WILL ACCEPT NOTHING BUT VENGEANCE --AND IF YOU WOULD HELP ME, MOTHER...


"...BRING ME A SUIT OF ARMOR TO REPLACE THE ONE VILE HECTOR CAPTURED--ONE SUCH AS BLOODTHIRSTY ARES HIMSELF WILL ENVY!"
THETIS, DEAR NYMPH--TO WHAT DO I OWE THIS VISIT?
I ASK A GREAT FAVOR, LORD HEPHAESTUS...

...THAT YOU USE YOUR MASTERY OF FIRE AND THE FOUNDRY TO CREATE A SUIT OF ARMOR FOR--
--YOUR SON! YES, I KNOW HIS PLIGHT! SAY NO MORE...

AND WITH THE GATHERINGS OF THE ACHAEAN TROOPS BEHIND THE BARRIER TO THE SHIPS...
MY PRIDE DAMAGED MY JUDGEMENT, AGAMEMNON! LET THERE BE AN END TO OUR STRIFE!
MY MIND WAS CLOUDED BY ZEUS! TO WELCOME YOU BACK TO OUR RANKS, ACHILLES --

-- I RETURN THE HAND OF BRISEIS, UNTAINTED... AND WHATEVER OF MY TREASURES YOU CARE TO --
YES YES YES... WHEN DO WE MARCH AGAINST THE TROJANS?

BUT BEFORE ACHILLES' IMPATIENCE CAN BE ANSWERED, A MYSTICAL MAGICAL FIGURE APPEARS FROM THE NIGHT AND...
YOUR ARMOR, MY SON --
--THE FINEST IN HEAVEN OR EARTH... BUT I WILL NOT STAY TO SEE WHAT YOU DO WITH IT!

THE SEA GODDESS VAN SHES AS QUICKLY AS SHE CAME AND NEARLY AS QUICKLY DOES ACHILLES SCRAMBLE INTO HIS ARMOR...
I AM READY.. I WILL TAKE TWELVE TROJAN PRISONERS TO SLAUGHTER ON PATROCLUS' FUNERAL PYRE!
LET US MARCH!
NOW--?

YOUNG MAN, YOU HAVE GONE FROM ONE EXTREME MOOD TO ANOTHER! OUR MEN ALL NEED DINNER AND A NIGHT'S SLEEP--
--TWO THINGS I SUGGEST YOU GET AS WELL... WE WILL BE REFRESHED FOR OUR MORNING BATTLE!

I AM INTERESTED IN NONE OF THOSE THINGS SO MUCH AS VENGEANCE...
...BUT I WILL WAIT FOR ALL OF YOU --OUT OF COURTESY!

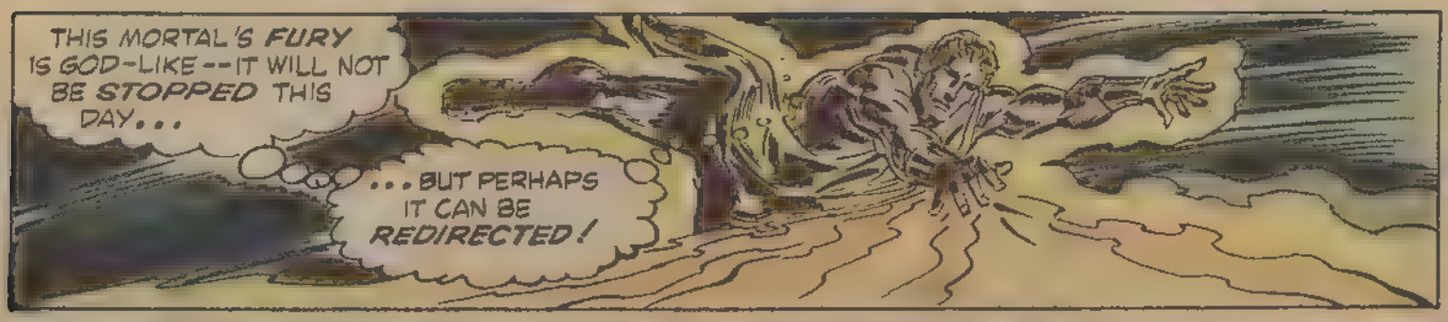
AS ON THE TROJAN PLAIN THERE ARE OTHERS AWAITING THE MORNING...
I HAD TO OVERRULE MY COMMANDERS WHO THOUGHT IT MORE PRUDENT...
...TO MAKE CAMP BEHIND THE WALLS OF TROY RATHER THAN HERE--
--BUT IF WE ARE TO FACE ACHILLES HERE IN THE OPEN...
...THEN BY THE GODS WE WILL BE READY!
AND AS HIS MEN EAT AND SLEEP, AS THE MOON SETS AND THE SUN RISES-- THE MAN THAT IS MORE THAN A MAN WAITS...
EEYAH-HAIEEEE
EEYAH-HAAIEEEEE

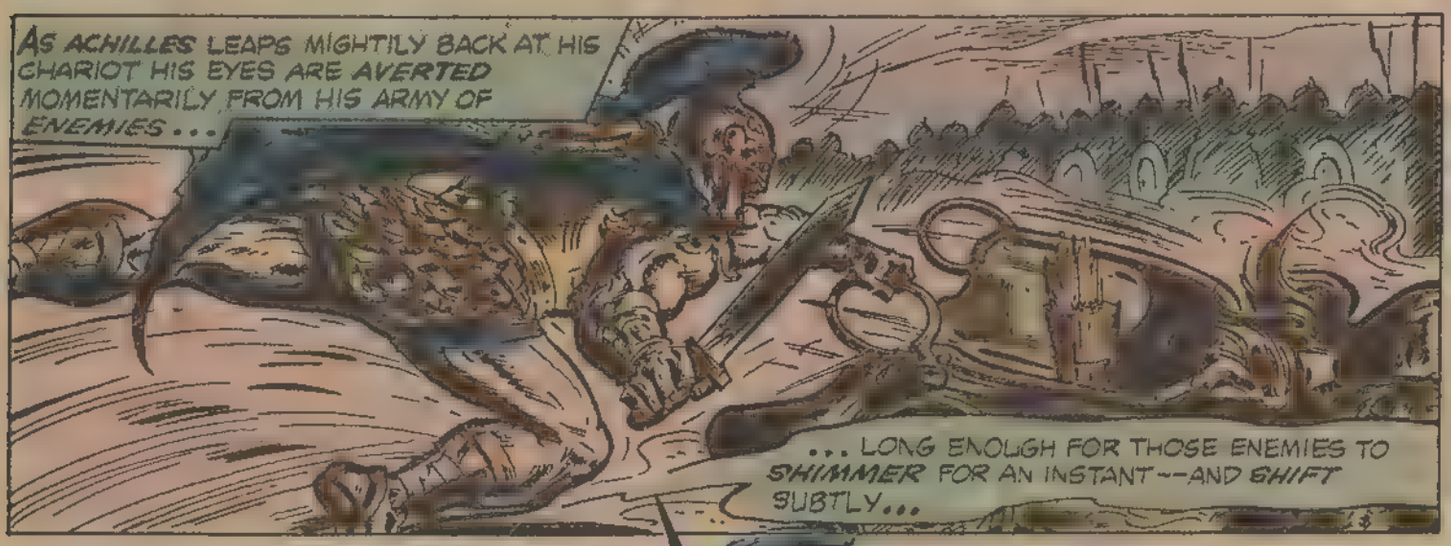
FAR AHEAD OF THE ACHAEAN HOST GALLOP THE STEEDS OF ACHILLES, FIRED BY THE FURY OF THEIR MASTER...
...WHO SHOOTS CRISSCROSSES OF SLAUGHTER OVER THE TROJAN RANKS LIKE AN ANGEL OF DEATH TOO LONG AT BAY--
SLASHING, HACKING, SLUGGING AND DISABLING, ACHILLES SINGLEHANDEDLY PLOWS THE ARMY OF TROY--
--LEAVING HIS FELLOWS NOTHING BUT TO TAKE PRISONER THE TWELVE DISABLED TROJANS HE LEAVES BEHIND, FOR THE SACRIFICE ON PATROCLUS' PYRE...

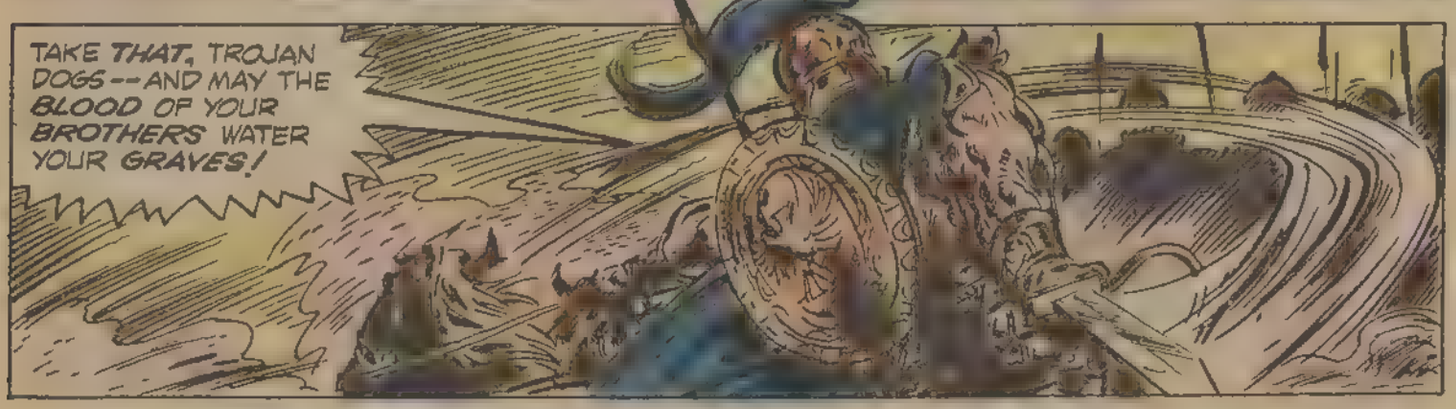
ACHILLES WILL EXCEED THE GREATNESS THAT IS HIS DESTINY IF HE IS NOT RESTRAINED--
--AND MEN MAY COME TO WORSHIP HIM AS GOD IN THAT CASE...
...THIS MUST NOT BE!
FORWARD, GODS AND GODDESSES--INTO THE FRAY! DO AS YOU WILL AND WOE TO THE LOSERS OF THIS BATTLE!
BUT IT WOULD BE UNTHINKABLE FOR A GOD TO LAY A HAND ON ACHILLES HIMSELF, BELOVED OF ZEUS...
...AND WITHOUT SO DOING THEY CAN DO LITTLE TO IMPEDE THIS ONE-MAN ARMY--
THEY CAN ONLY ENJOY THEMSELVES, AS IN THEIR HABIT WHEN MIXING IN THE AFFAIRS OF MEN...
AENEAS, BROTHER TO HECTOR... TASTE THE SWORD OF--
--EH?
YOU HAVE A SUPERNATURAL FRIEND, AENEAS BUT NO MATTER.

... THOSE FEW WHO DO SURVIVE THIS DAY WILL NOT SOON FORGET IT!
MOST OF THE OLYMPIANS ON THE TROJAN SIDE ENTER THE BATTLE AGAINST THE ACHAEAN SOLDIERS--
--WHO ARE DOING LITTLE MORE THAN FOLLOWING IN THE WAKE OF THEIR LEADER...
... WHILE ACHILLES HIMSELF MOMENTARILY ABANDONS HIS HORSES AND CHARIOT--
--AND BECOMES AN EPIC POEM OF MOTION AND RAGE...
SO BE IT WITH ALL WHO FOLLOW HECTOR!

HE IS FLEET AND MIGHTY, THIS PRINCE OF ACHAEA -- THIS SON OF MAN AND GODDESS -- THIS ONE GIFTED OF ZEUS -- THIS PROUD, RELENTLESS WARRIOR...
... WHOM MANY A BRAVE SOLL HE DID SEND SCREAMING TO HADES -- WHOSE JUSTICE IS THE SLASH OF A SWORD AND WHOSE RAGE WOULD PUT THE FIRES OF THE VERY SUN TO SHAME --
--IN A LAND WHERE VIRTUE IS STRENGTH AND WISDOM IS CUNNING... WHERE A STRONG SWORD ARM AND THE INFLEXIBLE WILL OF ONE MAN CAN TURN THE COURSE OF HISTORY --
-- N THAT LAND IS ACH LLES LORD!


THIS MORTAL'S FURY IS GOD-LIKE--IT WILL NOT BE STOPPED THIS DAY...
...BUT PERHAPS IT CAN BE REDIRECTED!


AS ACHILLES LEAPS MIGHTILY BACK AT HIS CHARIOT HIS EYES ARE AVERTED MOMENTARILY FROM HIS ARMY OF ENEMIES...
...LONG ENOUGH FOR THOSE ENEMIES TO SHIMMER FOR AN INSTANT--AND SHIFT SUBTLY...


TAKE THAT, TROJAN DOGS--AND MAY THE BLOOD OF YOUR BROTHERS WATER YOUR GRAVES!

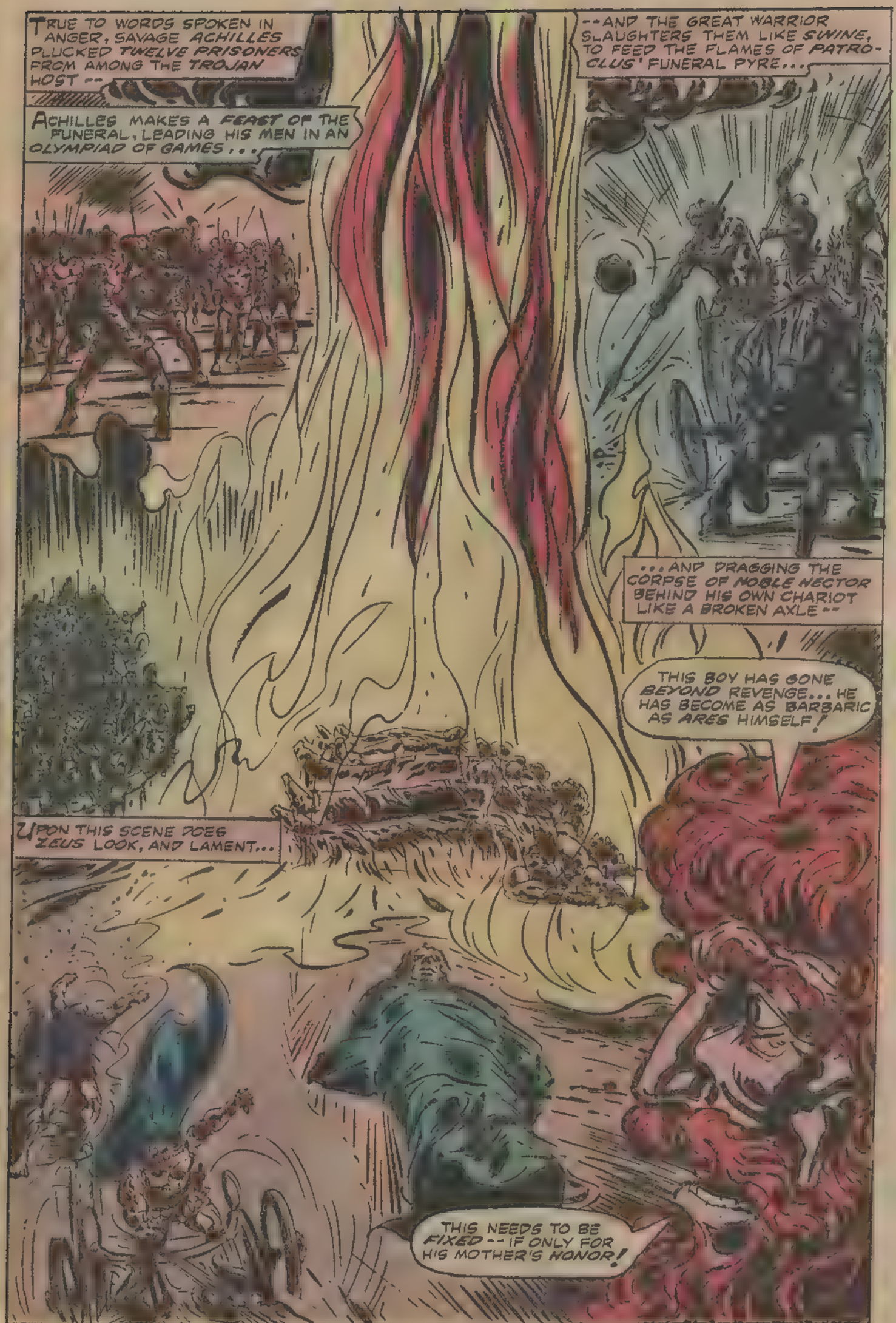
HURRY! BEHIND THE WALLS TO WAIT OUT THE ANGER OF ACHILLES--

--BEFORE THE ACHAEAN REALIZES HE IS SLASHING AT SHADOWS SENT BY APOLLO AND NOT THE TROJAN ARMY!

THEY ARE ALL INSIDE, THE DOORS ARE CLOSING! THANK THE --
NO!! --PRIAM, OUR SON HECTOR IS OUT THERE... THEY ALL RETREATED EXCEPT... EXCEPT...
...ACHILLES!
THE KING AND QUEEN CALL TO THEIR SON, WHO SEEMS DEAF OR FROZEN WITH FEAR AT THE ONCOMING GOD-MAN...
FEARFUL HECTOR SURELY IS --
--BUT HE IS HARDLY FROZEN!
THREE TIMES AROUND THE CITY DOES HECTOR LEAD ACHILLES IN A SPRINT --HOPING FOR HELP FROM SOME GOD...
BUT NO GOD WILL INTERCEDE FOR DESTINY HAS PLANNED THIS DUEL...
...AS HECTOR FINALLY REALIZES --
PLEASE --IF I AM KILLED, TREAT MY BODY WITH RESPECT AS I WOULD YOURS!
AS YOU WOULD THAT OF PATROCLUS... PREPARE TO DIE A THOUSAND DEATHS, TROJAN!

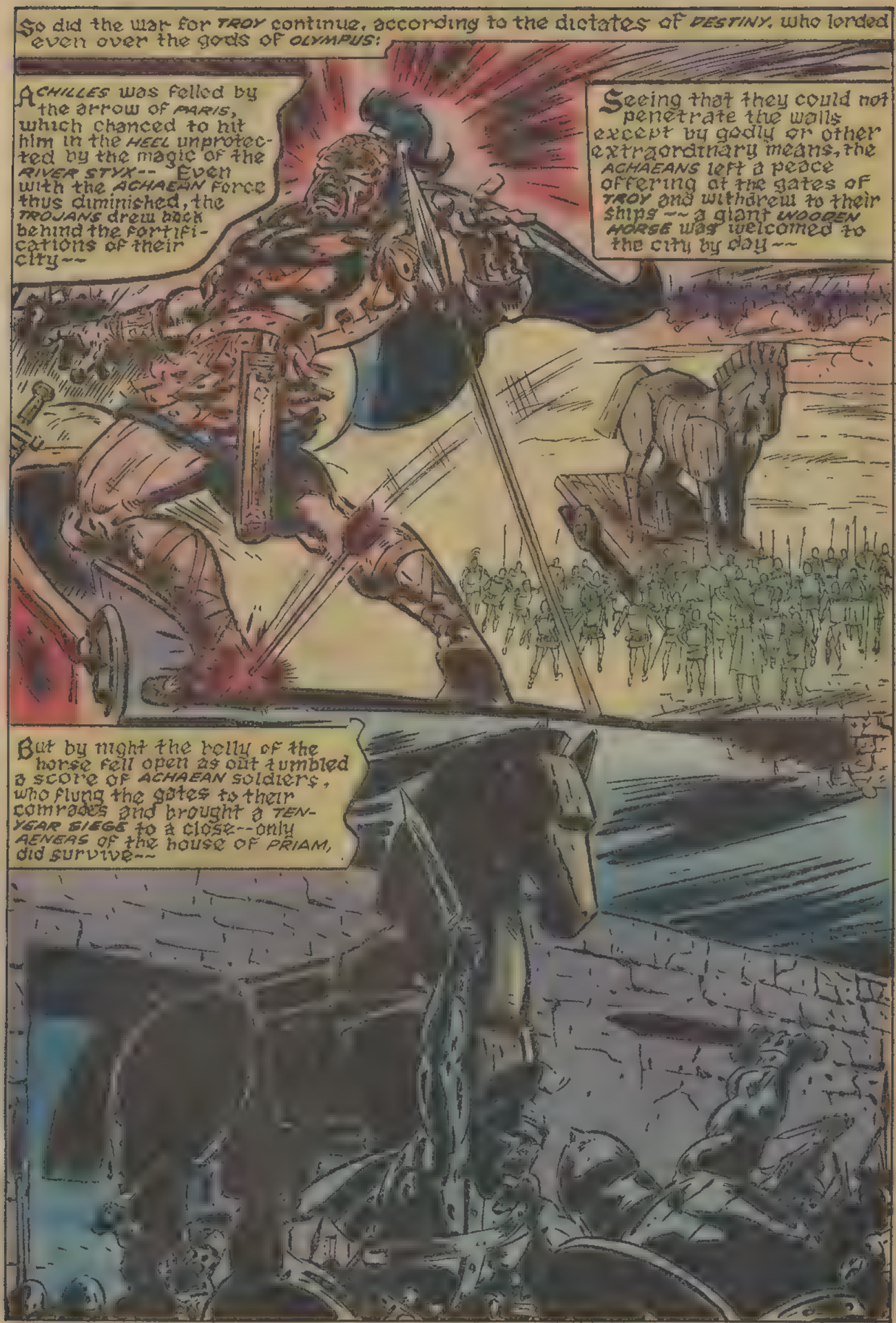
SING O MUSES AND GODDESSES, THE RAGE OF ACHILLES--WHO SCORNS HIS OWN WEAPONS TO FACE THE MIGHTIEST OF THE TROJAN WARRIORS...
ACHILLES--TRUSTING ONLY TO HIS OWN MIGHT AND THE ARMOR FORGED BY HEPHAESTUS, GOD OF FIRE...
AND IT IS FIRE THAT BURNS IN THE SOUL OF THE ACHAEAN COMMANDER--FIRE THAT WILL NOT BE QUENCHED BY MERE REVENGE...
HECTOR KNOWS--AS HE KNEW WHEN HE TOOK FLIGHT ROUND THE WALLS OF TROY--THAT EVEN ACHILLES COULD NOT BEST ACHILLES THIS DAY...

THE ARMOR ONCE WORN BY MY FATHER PELEUS WAS FORGED FOR THE FRAME OF A MAN...
...NOT A DEAD PIG!
KING PRIAM AND HECUBA, HIS WIFE, LOOK UPON THE WARRIOR'S BLOOD RAGE FROM THE BATTLEMENTS OF TROY--
--BUT SO HORRIBLE AND FEARSOME IS THAT RAGE THAT NEITHER THE KING NOR ANY OF HIS COMMANDERS THINKS TO ORDER A MAN BEYOND THE WALLS TO RETRIEVE THE BODY...
...WHICH, STRIPPED OF ITS ARMOR, IS DRAGGED VULNERABLE OVER THE PLAIN TO THE WALL BEFORE THE ACHAEAN SHIPS--
E-EYAH-HAAIEEEEEE
--ACCOMPANIED BY A BATTLE CRY THAT SEEMS TO CAUSE EVEN THE BUFFETTING CORPSE TO TREMBLE ON ITS WAY...
A CRY THAT IS NEARLY MATCHED BY THE ACHAEAN ARMY AT THEIR OWN FORTIFICATIONS...
COMRADES-- PATROCLUS IS AVENGED!


TRUE TO WORDS SPOKEN IN ANGER, SAVAGE ACHILLES PLUCKED TWELVE PRISONERS FROM AMONG THE TROJAN HOST --
--AND THE GREAT WARRIOR SLAUGHTERS THEM LIKE SWINE, TO FEED THE FLAMES OF PATROCLUS' FUNERAL PYRE...
ACHILLES MAKES A FEAST OF THE FUNERAL, LEADING HIS MEN IN AN OLYMPIAD OF GAMES...
...AND DRAGGING THE CORPSE OF NOBLE HECTOR BEHIND HIS OWN CHARIOT LIKE A BROKEN AXLE --
THIS BOY HAS GONE BEYOND REVENGE... HE HAS BECOME AS BARBARIC AS ARES HIMSELF!
UPON THIS SCENE DOES ZEUS LOOK, AND LAMENT...
THIS NEEDS TO BE FIXED -- IF ONLY FOR HIS MOTHER'S HONOR!

SO DOES NIGHT CRAWL CAT-EYED OVER THE WARRIORS, AND IN THE TENT OF ACHILLES...
TOMORROW WE WOULD DO WELL TO ATTACK THE FAR SIDE OF THE WALL AND DIVERT THE--
NOBLE ACHILLES --IT IS I...
KING PRIAM --HERE?!
SHEATH YOUR SWORDS! HE IS AN OLD MAN...
...AND SURELY HIS MISSION HAS THE BLESSING OF THE GODS, SINCE HE REACHED HERE UNSEEN!
INDEED, THE HAND OF ZEUS HIMSELF MUST BE UPON HIM--
--GRANTING HIM THE STRENGTH TO KISS THE HAND THAT HAS SLAIN SO MANY OF HIS SONS!
FLEET-FOOTED ONE, I MUST SPEAK WITH YOU ALONE...
...I BRING A SUPPLY OF TREASURES FROM THE WANING GOODS OF A ONCE WEALTHY CITY--
--TO TRADE FOR THE BODY OF HECTOR!
SURELY WE WERE WRONG TO TRY TO DEFILE THE REMAINS OF YOUR SQUIRE PATROCLUS--
--BUT I PLEAD WITH YOU TO ALLOW MY SON INTO THE KINGDOM OF THE DEAD WITH DIGNITY!
I COME NOT AS A KING... I COME AS AN OLD MAN WHO WAS ONCE ALMOST AS GREAT A WARRIOR AS YOU...
...BUT I COME MOSTLY AS A FATHER--!

PERHAPS GREAT ACHILLES THINKS OF HIS OWN AGED FATHER PELEUS...
PELEUS--ONCE A GREAT WARRIOR, HE WOULD NEVER AGAIN SEE HIS SON EITHER...
AND YES, HE TELLS KING PRIAM, YES--YOU MAY TAKE YOUR SON NOW...
FOR TWELVE DAYS DID THE ACHAEAN HOST SET ASIDE THEIR SPEARS, THEIR SWORDS AND THEIR ARROWS...
...AND FOR TWELVE DAYS DID THE PEOPLE OF THE WALLED CITY--NOBLES AND COMMONERS ALIKE--MOURN HECTOR, BRAVEST OF ALL THE TROJANS!


So did the war for TROY continue, according to the dictates of DESTINY, who lorded even over the gods of OLYMPUS:
ACHILLES was felled by the arrow of PARIS, which chanced to hit him in the HEEL unprotected by the magic of the RIVER STYX-- Even with the ACHAEAN force thus diminished, the TROJANS drew back behind the fortifications of their city--
Seeing that they could not penetrate the walls except by godly or other extraordinary means, the ACHAEANS left a peace offering at the gates of TROY and withdrew to their ships -- a giant WOODEN HORSE was welcomed to the city by day --
But by night the belly of the horse fell open as out tumbled a score of ACHAEAN soldiers, who flung the gates to their comrades and brought a TEN-YEAR SIEGE to a close--only AENEAS of the house of PRIAM, did survive--

MENELAUS, who vowed to kill his unfaithful wife, and for whose honor the war was fought, was once again taken by the regal beauty of HELEN, a goddess among mortal women--She consented to sit beside him again on the throne of SPARTA--In the course of the ten years CLYTAEMNESTRA, wife and queen of AGAMEMNON, took another man for husband and king--
And the unfortunate leader of the ACHAEANS was stabbed and killed as he thought to resume his rule --wise ODYSSEUS, peer of ZEUS in council, was doomed to exile yet another ten years--
He led his men in an aimless ODYSSEY among the monsters and wonders of the MEDITERRANEAN before he returned to his prudent wife, PENELOPE--
Thus were the lives of great men and women in this time ruled by forces they may well have understood, but could not control--Thus did they beat their breasts and contend to the death for the amusement of greater beings who called themselves IMMORTALS--immortals who themselves have now returned to the dust from which came the men who were their playthings...
Fin

According to legend, the Iliad was written by a blind poet named Homer, who lived in Greece around 800 B.C. Homer did not actually *write* his epics, rather, he composed them from stories passed down orally by generations of bards. Since the art of writing had not been invented at that time, all literature was recited and memorized, and the culture of a nation thus passed by word of mouth across the span of centuries.

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